



Locked and Loaded

Mandy Baxter

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With a rock-hard body and steel blue eyes, Mason Decker is about to become the U.S. Marshals' newest recruit. But one last undercover job with a straitlaced attorney will test him to his limits . . .

Charlotte Cahill intends to take down an infamous diamond smuggler on the FBI's Most Wanted list—and she intends to do it by the book. That won't be easy with the cocky new temporary deputy on her task force. Mason Decker feels like trouble, especially when his cool gaze wanders across her hot body . . .

After his time as a Customs officer, Decker has enough experience hanging out with criminals to know that working undercover means following your instincts, not the rules. It doesn't take long for him to lock horns with Cahill. But when the sexy assistant U.S. attorney is accidentally dragged out of her orderly world and into the turn-on-a-dime tension of Decker's deceptive games, she'll find that nothing is as seductive as playing a new role . . .

Praise for Mandy Baxter's U.S. Marshals series

"A little bit of suspense and a whole lot of passion make this the perfect read for adventurous romance fans."
—*RT Book Reviews*, 4 Stars

"Fast-paced and full of heat, this is romantic suspense done right!"—Julie Ann Walker

"The perfect mix of steam and on-the-edge-of-your-seat suspense. I couldn't turn the pages fast enough."—Tracey Garvis Graves

"Page-turning, rip-roaring action."—*Publishers Weekly*

Locked and Loaded Details

Date : Published September 27th 2016 by Zebra

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Author : Mandy Baxter

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Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Romantic Suspense

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From Reader Review Locked and Loaded for online ebook

Irene says

4.5 stars

Locked and Loaded was such a good read.

Loved the storyline, it was thrilling, fast paced and very entertaining. I stayed up late into the night reading, I just couldn't put it down.

I enjoyed watching Charlotte and Decker get to know each other, lock horns and fight the attraction between them. They amused me, they entertained me and by the end I was left with a heart full of happy feels.

I'm loving the U.S Marshals series, each book can be read as a standalone and I highly recommend them all!!

Thank you to Kensington Books - Zebra via Netgalley for the advance copy.

Anita says

ARC provided by the Publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

This is my first book by Mandy Baxter and although this is #5 in the series it reads like a complete stand alone. I really like it and plan to go back and read the other books. It is so nice to discover a series where you don't feel totally adrift if you pick up a book out of order. It also is nice to have a fast paced sting plot and a hot romance, too.

Charlie is a U.S. Attorney who is the head of a Task Force trying to bring down Faction Five, a syndicate whose leaders are purported to be law enforcement and government employees. Charlie has daddy issues and is a control freak, micromanager who sees the Task Force as her way to finally make daddy proud. The Task Force knows very little about Faction Five, but they do know that a diamond smuggler, Kieran Eagan, is connected. The way to Kieran's organization is through his "brother" Mason.

Mason is the black sheep of his family. He chose law enforcement over the family business, crime. He is not thrilled that he has been tapped to infiltrate Kieran's organization, but he wants a shot at being a U.S. Marshal and this is it.

Charlie's micromanaging gets her in deep trouble with Mason. Mason has stepped outside the box that Charlie constructed for him and when she takes action to smack him down, she ends up being his partner in the sting. Instead of sitting a safe distance away and pulling everyone else's strings, she is in the middle of a very dangerous operation and in danger of losing her heart.

Christi Snow says

My Review:

I've enjoyed this entire series. This book had a slightly different feel to it, but that definitely wasn't a bad thing...in fact, I really liked the twists and turns in this one.

Decker is not a US Marshal yet, but he wants to be. That's been his goal from the moment he became a law enforcement officer, but he's been passed over multiple times...because he's part of one of the most notorious crime families. At the beginning of this book, he's offered his dream...a slot at US Marshal school. He just has to use his criminal brother to bring down a new crime syndicate. No problem for this guy who's spent most of his career working undercover...but it's his brother. There's some loyalty at test there.

Charlie is the US District Attorney in charge of this task force. She doesn't know anything about Decker, most especially if she can trust him. So when he makes an unexpected move, she barges in...putting herself in the midst of the undercover operation...something that she's not trained to do at all. But now they're stuck together in a very dangerous situation.

I really did enjoy the whole setup for this one. The tension between Decker and Charlie felt very real...and when they eventually give into it, dang...they are sexy together. Those scenes were absolutely sizzling. Then there's all the intrigue and action of the case they're working. I loved all that tension.

And I can't talk about this book without talking about Kiernan. I know he's not a US Marshal...but I want him to get a story, too. He's such a tragic character and my heart broke for the glimpses we got of his true emotion. I want him to have some happy in his life. Please...

Note: This is a series I continue to buy in print just because the covers are so dang gorgeous. Did you take a good look at that cover? OMG, it's absolute perfection.

I received a complimentary copy of this book in return for an honest review.

Anna's Herding Cats says

Reviewed for herding cats & burning soup.

Amazon: <http://amzn.to/2ciVeg9>

Locked and Loaded (U.S. Marshals #5)

Locked and Loaded.... non-stop action with a side of steamy romance. Yes, please!

The quick of it is that Charlie's been named head of a task force set up to shut down an up and coming secret group that's up to no good...and likely packed full of high ranking officials. She's got to track them down, infiltrate and take em down. With the help of an infamous conman's son.

I enjoyed Charlie and Mason. The two are freaking exactly alike. They're the "good guys" and determined to rise through the ranks--she wants to make a name for herself as a federal attorney and he wants to join the US Marshals which because of his family connections has been a no-go. They're stubborn, control freaks, and all in. And they drove each other crazy. It was pretty damn fun watching them butt heads and battle for power in their relationship. I think with anyone else they'd be really obnoxious but since they were so evenly matched it was just fun watching their power plays, how the relationship panned out, and that little spark they got when the other challenged them in some way.

There's lots of steam and chemistry between them. Holy cow the hotness. I didn't totally feel the falling in love part but that's mainly because the romance side takes a huge backseat to the action side of the storyline. But the attraction and makings of a romance? Oh, yeah.

And action packed it was! Going undercover, diamond smuggling and back alley deals, danger and intrigue and not knowing exactly what they were getting themselves into as they tried to gain the trust of someone they thought was connected to the bad guys. It was exciting and a little nerve wracking now and again.

All in all, Baxter brought an exciting adventure to the table. One where black and white blur just a little and the gray areas take over. Add in some scorching hot attraction and intriguing characters and Locked and Loaded made for an excellent escape.

Jennifer says

Mandy Baxter's U.S. Marshals series is one that continues to keep me up past my bedtime!

Read this review in its entirety at [The Book Nympho](#)

XxTainaxX says

Great story that explores unconventional family dynamics and the gray areas between black and white. Charlie and Mason end up undercover trying to find more information on a powerful group. As they spend time together, the attraction between them increases. As individuals, they each experience growth and show depth. As a couple, they seem to represent a contrasting element to one another that just weaves itself cohesively into their fabric. In the bedroom, these two are so very sexy. Seriously hot. The plot was very interesting and well paced. The writing was excellent. The secondary characters definitely piqued my interest and were not on any way predictable. All in all a great read and a series I plan on continuing to follow. Safety: No OW/OM/Sharing, despite h having to flirt w OM for the mission. Neither were Vs. no rape or abuse.

ARC received in exchange for an honest review.

Dísir says

The unusual plot of diamond smuggling, cons and undercover work in 'Locked and Loaded' has been entertaining from the get go - and is possibly the best of the U.S. Marshal series to date. It's currently my antidote for listless, clichéd-ridden summer reads and a perfect choice for a high-octane action flick in narrative form, to the extent where I was sorry when it all ended so quickly.

What starts out as a man sidelined in law enforcement for his infamous family and a prickly U.S. Attorney turns into an elaborate con with twists and turns I didn't see coming. Mandy Baxter has written a sufficiently complex plot to keep the action going, with very strong lead characters who are compelling in their own right without crossing the line into smarmy or super-human...along with a cast of shady secondary ones who

themselves aren't caricatures. But it's also a showing of diamond valuation, the stones' shady origins and the bloody politics involved from raw material to production and selling - a complex minefield that Mason Decker and Charlie Cahill find themselves in with their necks barely above water. That the story covered issues like the moral grey areas of going undercover - and betraying one's own family and principles while doing so - dramatised the plot and the main characters more sharply than ever and frankly, was a treat to read as Mason walked these painful steps to dissociate himself once again, from a life he'd never known.

Watching Mason's and Charlie's relationship grow degree by degree as their interactions turned from hostile to wary and finally to scorching was beyond entertaining and enjoyable. I liked seeing how their mutual admiration of each other grew through a situation that neither could get out of and how they managed to find common ground together.

It's definitely a plot that could keep going on - even if all the books in the series are standalone books - and I hope it does. With an ending that seems a little rushed and a loose end that isn't quite so tied up, maybe...just maybe...we'll see Mason and Charlie again.

It's too soon to say goodbye.

*ARC by netgalley
(thrilled and grateful, especially for this)

Lady Heather says

"An ARC has been provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review"

? Kimberly says

Caffeinated dates with Locked and Loaded

First Date: Mason Decker a Customs officer for the US Border Patrol has applied repeatedly for a position within the U.S. Marshals. When he is called into their offices, he is worried he'll be told not to apply again. Instead, he is offered a chance to prove himself but it will cost him. Charlotte Cahill is leading the task force for his assignment. Their target is an infamous diamond smuggler. Charlotte (Charlie) is a control freak and wants things played by the book. Decker knows the players and to succeed they will need to do things his way. Oh boy I see these two butting heads. Things get REALLY interesting when Charlie accidentally places herself undercover as Decker's partner. Between the sizzling chemistry and headstrong attitudes, we are in for one heck of a ride.

Second date: The case is interesting as Decker personally knows the players and to get into their good graces they will need to prove themselves. Charlie is strong, confident and needs to be in control. Decker admires that, but also worries she will blow the case or worse come to harm. Their contact is a strong, charismatic character. He's cocky and yet one cannot help but like him. The dynamics of his relationship to Decker was intense and added an element I enjoyed. I loved the back and forth banter between Decker and Charlie. We can feel the attraction building between them and Kieran their contact creates extra tension. When these two collide, it's explosive, sweet and incredibly heated. I loved the back and forth as we got to

know the characters, learn about their history and discover their weaknesses.

Third date: Baxter delivers lots of heated, sexy time for this couple and allows the reader to witness them becoming connected beyond the physical. I was worried the case would suffer but Baxter provides obstacles, intense action scenes and a twist that kept me flipping the pages before delivering a stellar ending. While the romance begins with lust and moves quickly, Baxter gives us a realistic ending that made me smile.

Copy provided publisher. This review was originally posted on Caffeinated Book Reviewer

Aly says

2.5

Mason Decker tried all his life to show he's not like his criminal father, but even a career in law enforcement can't stop doubts. Refused two times for the position he covets, he's between job when a proposition difficult to refuse is offered to him.

He's just got to con his father (who's in jail) and the friend (who was raised with him) he has not seen for ten years, so he can leads him to the wanted organisation of crooked cops and politicians. But he did not anticipate having to team up with assistant U.S. attorney for the undercover job. He may try to intimidate her with his tough attitude, but she's just as feisty as he is.

I'm sorry to say, it didn't work for me this time. I don't think they worked like professionals but more like lovesick teenager letting their hormones take the lead. Even from the beginning, Charlotte acted too much like a panting dog in front of Mason. And I didn't believe in their love story. And do I need to mention that the traitor is no surprise, because this idea is always used and I'm so sick of this cliché ? The same can be said about what happened to Kieran in the end.

I don't recommend to begin the series with this book, the others was so much better.

Natalie The Biblioholic says

4.5 stars!! Romantic suspense at its finest!!

Charlie is a federal prosecutor. She's smart, tough, and arrogant while being vulnerable (yeah, I'm not even sure how that works lol). She has been chosen to lead a task force to investigate and take down the Faction Five, a crime syndicate thought to consist of men of power (i.e. federal judge, senator, etc.).

Mason is a former CBP (Customs and Border Protection) agent, dissatisfied with the politics of the system. He bucks authority but desperately wants to be a U.S. Marshall. He finally gets the opportunity but the position hinges on his cooperation with the task force. Unfortunately, it's his background they're more interested in, not his skills, because the lead that they want to go after... Mason's brother, an infamous gem smuggler.

And from the there the story takes a life of its own. It was incredibly interesting, while being fast-paced, sexy, and intense. I strongly recommend it to all romantic suspense lovers.

Copy provided in exchange for an honest review

XO

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

OK, I gave up at 29%. This one just wasn't for me. I got this from NetGalley and I hate not to finish an ARC, but this one just didn't work for me.

I will say right off I loved the cover - it's not over the top in your face, and still manages to be smokin' hot. Kudos to whoever designed it. And the author's style of writing worked and I would definitely give this author another chance.

For me, it's the characters and the set up of the plot that I failed to connect with.

Charlie the heroine just rubbed me the wrong way from the get go. First I've reached my quota a long time ago at confusing a female character with a male name. Second the meeting of the H/h was way too contrived. I couldn't understand why an Assistant DA was in charge of a task force that the US Marshall's office had put together. And with the way that Charlie's character was written, I couldn't see her in charge of any high level and secret task force. I found myself questioning so many actions that happened in the first 20% of the book that I was really struggling. And then we move to the attraction between the Charlie and Mason and I just wasn't interested.

I read and review for fun and this wasn't fun. A lot of other people who read the same genres as I do really like this book and this series, so I think it may be just me and not this book.

I want to thank NetGalley and Zebra Publishing for the opportunity read this ARC.

Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says

LOCKED AND LOADED is easily the best in the U.S. Marshals series by Mandy Baxter. Right from the get-go it snatches your attention and never lets go. Mason Decker is a treat for all the women out there who like broody alpha males. He's the U.S. Marshal's newest recruit, but Mason still has a lot to prove before he can be considered one of them.

His first assignment involves taking down an infamous diamond smuggler who also happens to be his "brother". Mason's personal relationship with the bad guy will come in handy, and he is using every advantage he can to take down this man.

Luckily, he has the help of Charlotte Cahill, a whip-smart attorney who has just landed herself right in the middle of the biggest case of her life. Charlie isn't used to the mind games that these men play, but she's right there with them, putting on a cool façade that fools many. I loved both Mason and Charlie individually, so it was really easy for me to fall in love with them as a couple. Upon their first meeting, they actually hate each other, but that only adds to the appeal when they are working side by side to take this diamond smuggler down.

I don't have a single complaint about this book. The banter is great, the sexual tension is there, but most of

all, I LOVED the case they were working on. The whole diamond thing had a touch of sexiness to it that only complemented the romance. And I have to say, Baxter's heroes in this series continue to get better. It makes me want to claim all of them for myself! Trust me when I say this is a must read!

Shari says

This review was originally posted on Delighted Reader

Ooops! I did it again. I picked up an interesting book on NetGalley without checking if it was part of a series. The good news, I didn't get lost as I navigated my way through it. So if there were returning characters, I don't even have a clue who they would have been.

Mandy Baxter writes a story about a man who wants to do right after growing up with a con artist. Mason Decker has one dream: to be a U.S. Marshal. The one thing stopping him: his father and brother. After two rejections, Mason is called in and he is confused as to why they want to deliver the rejection in person only to find out they need him for a mission. A mission that includes his father and brother. He's good at undercover work and his family is the way into getting a huge criminal syndicate forming. The key....he takes the mission to betray his family and he gets the position he so caveats. Then he meets the person in charge.

Charlotte Cahill, or Charlie, is heading up a mission to take down a new criminal element cropping up its head. The only link they have is Mason's brother Kieran. While the U.S. Marshal wants Kieran for gem smuggling, they need him more as a source into something much bigger. Charlie doesn't mind using Mason to get what she wants, but she doesn't trust him even is his under cover work for customs has been squeaky clean.

These two lock horns right away and I can't say I saw much in the way of sparks fly. They seem attracted to each other, but they really don't like each other. When Charlie does something stupid, she gets put in the mix and now they have to rely on each other to get out. It felt pushed and not natural for these two to fall in love. Again it was such a short time and wham, the L word is being bandied around in their minds.

The passion between the sheets is pretty intense when they finally get around to it, but still I didn't see much of a relationship forming between the two. After about one scene, we just get they tried and true "they made love all through the night" line. It isn't the last one, but it does make for wondering if they really are meant to be together forever after one night in the midst of some suspenseful times.

Mason came across as an ass and Charlie as a bitch at times. Both are struggling to be in charge, but neither invoked in me confidence they knew what they were doing.

Now not all was bad. I enjoyed the story enough, just didn't find it to be a great story. I would gladly try more stories from this author as the writing style was engaging. So don't think I didn't enjoy the story, I just had a few problems that kept me from raving about it.

This review was originally posted on Delighted Reader

Steph says

Thanks to Ms. Baxter's U.S. Marshal series, I've officially promoted marshals to a sexy pay grade ahead of FBI agents. Sorry guys. Nothing personal.

When Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlotte Cahill is asked to head up a task force to bring down the Faction Five group, she doesn't expect to have to work with a man who personifies the word arrogant and bossy. Mason Decker and his sketchy family history have all the potential to be a major problem when it comes to bringing down one of the most wanted diamond smugglers, Kieran Eagan, especially when she finds out Mason is essentially the dude's brother.

Mason and Kieran grew up together, both being taught by one of the world's most notorious criminals but landing on either side of the good/bad coin. Mason has sworn never to go after Kieran, but if it'll get him on the short list for employment with the U.S. Marshals, he'll do what he has to do. When Charlie becomes involved on a deeper level than he anticipated, he'll not only have to teach her everything he knows about running a con, but he'll also have to keep her safe. Easier said than done.

I absolutely adored LOCKED AND LOADED, book 5 in the U.S. Marshals series by the awesome Ms. Baxter! Mason was all growly Alpha badass goodness, and Charlie was definitely a badass in her own right. They had killer chemistry, and I loved the two of them working together to take down Kieran's organization (though I kind of loved him too and hope there's a "Guys Who the U.S. Marshals Hunt" spinoff so we can get more of him). Kieran stole the show as the ultimate gentleman thief, a charming, good looking and dangerous criminal mastermind who played by nobody's rules but his own.

The suspense was well written and exciting, and I flipped pages furiously, excited to find out what would happen next! Would Mason finally be tempted to follow in his illustrious father and brother's footsteps or would he actually take down the man he grew up with? The ending was excellent, very satisfying all around. And the sex scenes were just fabulous...although I so wouldn't have minded a yummy threesome between Mason, Kieran and Charlie...just sayin'.

Bottom Line: This is a terrific romantic suspense series featuring a group of law enforcement officials that are almost mythical in their history and abilities. - See more at: <http://www.theromancereviews.com/view...>

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